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# SERMON

Preached before the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

Lord Mayor;

AND

Aldermen of London;

AT

GUILD-HALL CHAPPEL,

on Sunday the 25th. of march 1677.

By *William Pindar*; Chaplain to the Right Honourable
*Ford* Lord *Grey* of *Werke*, and Fellow of
*University Colledge* in OXFORD.

LONDON;

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Perlegi

# Davies Mayor.

Martis XXVII.° *die* Martii 1677. *Annoq; Regni Regis* Caroli *Secundi*; Angliæ; &c. XXIX,

THis Court doth desire Mr. *Pindar* to Print his Sermon Preached at the *Guild Hall Chappel* on the 25*th* day of this instant *March*, before the *Lord Mayor*; and *Aldermen* of this City.

*Wagstaffe.*

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Imprimatur;

April 11.° 1677. *Guili Jane* R.P.D.
*Hen. Episc. Londi*
Sacr. domesticis.

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Edmund Harington bought on 11 d
Thursday 23d May 1678 Pretium 04

TO

# The Right Honourable.

## Sir THOMAS DAVIES.

## LORD MAYOR.

OF

# LONDON;

And to the

## COURT of ALDERMEN.

Right Honourable;

I *Did not design that the following Sermon should have been otherwise publick than from the* Pulpit; *but since you have been pleased to think it worthy of being so from the Press, I humbly recommend it to your Pa-*

 *tronage,*

*tronage; and have no more to do, but to beſeech Almighty God, that it may proſper in the work whereunto it is ſent, and that every one that ſhall read it, may reap ſome benefit by it. Which is the hearty deſire of*

Right Honourable;

Your moſt humble Servant;

*William Pindar.*

PROV. XVIJ. v. 27. *A man of Understanding is of an excellent spirit.*

THat all true Knowledge does very much enlarge all the Faculties of the Soul, and enable them to perform their several Functions with greater readiness, and vivacity, is evident from the nature of *Truth*, whose property it is to *make us Free*, to deliver our Minds from the Incumbrances of Ignorance and Errour, to raise them from that vale of darkness and misery wherein they would otherwise lie groveling, and to endue us with true amplitude and ingenuity of spirit. And hence it came to pass, that some men who had no other conduct but the light of Nature, whose Employment it was to seek after *Wisdom*, were many of them Men of such raised capacities, and every way so fitted to serve their generations; that they kept the World from being

over-run with Barbariſme and ſtupidity; and by cultivating of Arts, eſtabliſhing Societies, and enlarging of Commerce and Converſation, did ſweeten the tempers of Mankind, made them become more ſerviceable to one another, and in ſome meaſure anſwer the ends of their Creation. It was Wiſdom and Knowledge which made them the bleſſing and ſecurity, as well as the glory of their ſeveral Ages; this which enrolled their Names in the *Annals* of their Countries, and makes the World in after-Ages, have more than ordinary Kindneſs for their Memories. And indeed not without reaſon, ſince it is Wiſdom and Underſtanding that makes one man much more uſeful, and ſo more valuable than another; without which, the great things of this World, *Birth*, and *Wealth*, and *Honour*, cannot give any great matter of Commendation; it is Wiſdom alone which makes theſe things become Illuſtrious, this which gives the preheminence, that ennobles and advances our Nature, *that is more precious than Rubies, and all the things that you can deſire, are not to be compared unto her.*

And this is in ſome meaſure true of that Wiſdom and Knowledge which fits a man for

for the prudent management of the affairs of this life. Which gives him an insight into the Natures of Things, and Consequences of Actions; which makes a man an able *Politician*, or an acute *Naturalist*; which acquaints him with the *Nature*, *Humours*, and *Passions* of Mankind; enables him to apply himself properly to them, and so to manage them, as to make their contrary studies, inclinations, and affections, joyntly conspire to advance the Common good.

But it is in a far more eminent sense true of that Divine Wisdom which the King of *Israel* so much recommends to us in this Book of *Proverbs*; the Excellency and Usefulness whereof he had found out both by deep consideration, and by trial and practice. Therefore does he Exhort us, *in all our getting, to get Understanding*; *for Wisedom is the principal thing*, that which we are to lay as the foundation of our happiness; that *she shall bring thee to Honour when thou dost embrace her, she shall give to thine head an ornament of Grace, and encompass thee with a Crown of Glory.* That therefore *Blessed is the man that heareth her, watching daily at her gates*; For, *If thou be thus wise, thou shalt be wise for thy self.* This

will eſtabliſh thy heart in that which is good, will refine thy ſpirit, and raiſe thy Mind above the delights and ſatisfactions of the Men of the World. This will give thee other pleaſures than they are acquainted with, and will miniſter Comforts which they cannot receive. This will be the conſtant guide and ſecurity of all thy wayes, and will preſerve thee from falling into the ſnares of Sin and Miſery; *For he that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely; the Law of the wiſe is the fountain of life; and a man of Underſtanding is of an Excellent ſpirit.*

And here in the firſt place it may not be amiſs to obſerve, That there is a different reading of theſe words ſet down in the Margent of our Bible, where that which in the *Text* is called *an excellent ſpirit*, is in the Margent, a *cool ſpirit*, *i.e.* a ſpirit not eaſily provoked, ſuch as is long-ſuffering and patient, not quick in reſenting injuries; in the *Septuagint*, μακρόθυμος; a ſedate and calm temper of mind, that is not apt to fly out upon any provocation into rage and paſſion. And this reading ſuits well with the foregoing part of the *Verſe*, *He that hath knowledge, ſpareth his words*, *i. e.* a wiſe man *is ſlow to ſpeak*, as St. *James*,

*c.* 1. 19. expreſſeth it; is wary and deliberate in his talk; in oppoſition to profuſe and impertinent babling in Common Converſation, to vain boaſting and vaunting ones ſelf, to Blabbing of Secrets, and to being prone to anger and impatience. Thus *he that hath knowledge, ſpareth his words*, is *ſlow to ſpeak*; and a man of Underſtanding is of a *cool ſpirit*, is alſo *ſlow to wrath.*

But indeed the whole ſenſe of the *Text* cannot be comprehended in that narrow notion, as our Tranſlation ſhews, and ſome *Critiques* have obſerved upon it; and therefore I ſhall conſider it in its fulleſt Latitude, and conſequently the Marginal ſenſe will be taken in, in my handling of it. Which I ſhall do by endeavouring to clear theſe things:

1. Who is this Man of Underſtanding, what kind of Wiſdom is it that denominates him, and upon what grounds he is called a *wiſe man.*

2. What this *Excellency of ſpirit* is, and what are thoſe things eſpecially that manifeſt it.

3. How this Wiſdom contributes to the ennobling of the Mind, ſo as to make a man

in

in whom it reſides, be emphatically called one of an *Excellent ſpirit*.

1. Who is this Man of Underſtanding, what kind of Wiſdom, &c.

Now by Underſtanding and Wiſdom, all along this Book, as in moſt places of Holy Scripture, is meant the ſincere practiſe of true Religion, Fearing of God, and keeping his Commandements. To honour, and to ſerve, and to love God, to believe in him, and to rely upon him, to acknowledge him in all our wayes, to make our Prayer always before him, and to behave our ſelves ſo as always under his all-ſeeing eye; to do unto others ſo as we our ſelves would be done unto; to govern our natural appetites according to the dictates of Reaſon and Religion, to make all our paſſions inſtruments of righteouſneſs, and to perform thoſe duties in our ſeveral relations which God, and Man expect from us, and ſo as to adorn the Doctrine of *Jeſus Chriſt* in all things; theſe are the inſtances of that Divine Wiſdom which the Holy Scripture recommends unto us; and all that Underſtanding, Prudence, and Policy, which does not manifeſt it ſelf in ſuch works as theſe, is *fooliſhneſs with God*. And to walk

walk contrary to God in those revelations of his Will which he has made known unto us, to live without any consideration of his Being, or Providence; For a weak and infirm Creature to behave himself so, as owning no dependance that he has upon the Almighty; to provoke Him to anger, who can with the meanest word of his Mouth, destroy and ruine us for ever; to bring upon our selves several Diseases by an immoderate indulging of our appetites; to lay in matter for future repentance, by now walking after the Lusts of the Flesh; to run the certain hazard of undergoing the greatest Miseries that can befal humane nature, for the short pleasures of sin; These are the instances of the greatest *madness and folly* that any man can possibly be guilty of; and to do thus, is the character of one that hates Knowledge, of one that is a Fool, and has no Understanding. For in the issue of things, he will be found the onely wise man, that Fears the Lord, and that departs from evil. Now that the Virtuous and Religious man is really a man of Understanding, and upon what account he is so, will appear by considering these *Two* things:

1. Be-

1. Becauſe he underſtands, and purſues ſteadily, that which is his trueſt intereſt, and makes all other things give way to it.

2. Becauſe he governs himſelf Commendably in that Station and Capacity which he poſſeſſes in the World, and in thoſe variety of Accidents which befall him in it. Now he that has made choice of the beſt End, and uſes all ſuitable means to obtain it; that governs his affairs diſcreetly, and behaves himſelf ſo in all conditions, as to gain Credit to himſelf, and his profeſſion, may well be ſtyled an *Underſtanding Man*. But thus a Virtuous and Religious Man does; For

1. He underſtands, and purſues ſteadily that which is his trueſt intereſt, and makes all other things give way to it.

For if it be poſſible that all thoſe great things which are talked concerning Immortality, and a Future Life ſhould be true; If there may be indeed a God that governs the World, that has placed man in it, in a ſtate capable of receiving much advancement, If he obſerve thoſe Laws which he has given to him; If this God may bring us all to Judgment, and may reward or puniſh us, according as we ſhall have ſpent our lives here; If

theſe

theſe Rewards and Puniſhments may chance to prove Eternal, and to anſwer that character which has been given of them; then the Religious man who lives ſo as if theſe things really were to come to paſs, does in ſo doing purſue his trueſt intereſt; becauſe there is ſo little proportion betwixt the things of this life, and thoſe which are ſaid to concern the other; thoſe things if they ſhould be, will ſo infinitely tranſcend all our affairs here; that theſe cannot be our intereſt when they are put in the ballance againſt thoſe; and he cannot be a wiſe man, that would not take ſome pains and care to ſecure the falling out of ſuch a chance.

But now if thoſe things be very probable, and there be very great likelihood that the Soul ſhall prove Immortal, and live for ever, either in endleſs Joyes, or Miſeries, and that according to its works here; If it be very unlikely that the Sinner who has lived *without God in the World*, without all ſenſe of his Providence, of his Holineſs, of his Juſtice, ſhould at laſt eſcape the Divine Vengeance, and that his ſins ſhould not at laſt find him out; If it be probable, that the fruits of his doings ſhall be at laſt given to him, whileſt

the Righteous ſhall be for ever happy in the enjoyment of the Love and Mercy of God, whom he faithfully ſerved here: then does the Pious Man purſue indeed his trueſt intereſt, and upon better grounds then they do who venture ſome part of their Eſtates in Merchandiſe, and by way of Trade to bring in more; in as much as if the Pious man's hopes ſucceed, of which there is as great a probability as there can be, it will more abundantly requite him: and if they ſhould not, yet his loſs would be very inconſiderable; and he that will not run the hazard of a ſmall loſs, ſuppoſing that ſome hazard were to be run, to gain a return ten thouſand times exceeding his venture, runs counter to all the wiſdom and providence of this world, and indeed is a moſt unfit man to live, and thrive in it.

But now laſtly, If after all this prove very *Certain*, *If verily there be a reward for the Righteous, and doubtleſs a God that judgeth in the earth*; If God will certainly *render tribulation and anguiſh upon every Soul of Man that doth evil, but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good*; If we ſhall as certainly die, as we do now live; and as certainly after death be

be brought to Judgment, and receive the things that we have done in the body, as that we ſhall die; If ſuch ſhall be our portion in that Future Eternal ſtate to which we are all haſting, as we have choſen here: And if we have as great proof and evidence of theſe things, as the nature of them will admit, and any reaſonable man would deſire to have; If the wiſeſt part of all Mankind in all Ages of the World, have not been cheated, and abuſed, and mad, when they did believe them, made Laws, adminiſtred Juſtice, and governed the World thereafter; If we may truſt the Teſtimonies of our own Conſciences, and every man's heart when it gives him ſecret warnings of them, has not put a trick upon us, and to no purpoſe falſly alarmed us, when there was nothing but ſhadow to diſturb us; If God himſelf who cannot lie, has not born witneſs to a Falſhood, when he has at ſundry times, and in divers manners, aſcertained theſe things to the World; If the Teſtimony of one that came to us from the dead, even of our Lord who brought *Life and Immortality to light*, may be thought convincing; If the Word of God, the Bloud of Martyrs, the Profeſſion of the

Church, or the Belief of the World, can make this Truth evident beyond all rational contradiction, as without controverſie they do: Then is it equally evident, that the Religious man who governs his life according to theſe principles, muſt needs by ſo doing purſue his trueſt intereſt. For if theſe things certainly be, which you ſee we have all the reaſon in the world to believe, it muſt be more a man's intereſt to ſecure his own Soul, then it could be to gain the whole world; all the moſt deſireable things of this preſent life, will not ballance the loſs of the Soul, *For what ſhall it profit a man, If he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his Soul?*

And therefore, the Pious Man who makes all the things of this World give way to this Great Intereſt; who prefers this in his choice, and takes care firſt to ſecure this, and whatever may become of his temporal affairs, is reſolved not to loſe himſelf eternally; This man who is thus wiſe for himſelf, in things of infinitely great moment: muſt needs be a wiſe and underſtanding man.

2. He is ſo, becauſe he governs himſelf Com-

Commendably in that ſtation and capacity which he poſſeſſes in the World, and in thoſe Accidents which may befall him in it.

By which is not meant, that a Virtuous man may be never guilty of any indiſcretions; or that he is always able to manage his affairs ſo dextrouſly in the World, as to be look't upon by others as a ſhrewd man, and one that has more than an ordinary inſight into things: but this is underſtood, namely, that making that allowance for mens natural tempers, and parts, and way of Education, their Converſe, and way of Living in the world, and ſeveral ſuch things, upon which the variety of mens abilities for buſineſs muſt depend; a Virtuous man ſhall certainly out-ſtrip him that is not ſo, in the true management of thoſe affairs which Providence ſhall call him unto; and whatſoever the iſſues of his labours are, ſhall more adorn that ſtation which he poſſeſſes in the World. For he that lives under a conſtant ſenſe of God's Providence, that knows that *he is not placed in the World at all adventure*, as the Atheiſt fooliſhly thought, *Wiſdome* 2. But that God has determined the bounds of our habitation; that he has ordered every man his

his Province, and what labour and work he ſhould be buſied about until the Evening, *till the Night comes wherein no man can work*; He that knows very well that God governs the World wiſely, and according to his own good pleaſure; that the ſucceſs of all our actions proceeds from his bleſſing alone, and that therefore lives in a conſtant dependance upon this Wiſe Diſpoſer of all things, and in an entire reſignation of himſelf, and his affairs to his good Providence; he that ſtudies to be quiet, and to do his own buſineſs, and meddles not with thoſe things which beſpeak men buſie-bodies in other mens matters: In a word, he that has *learned in what ſtate ſoever he is, therewith to be content*, is fit to live Commendably in any eſtate, for poſſeſſing an even and equal temper of Mind, he will live humbly, thankfully, and watchfully, and ſo make every condition become advantageous to him.

If he be in Authority, he conſiders by whoſe hand he was placed there, for what End he was raiſed above his Brethren; he will ſtudy to promote the Publick good, governing ſuch as are committed to his Charge in the Fear of God, always remembring that account which

which he must make. If he be an inferiour, he learns the duty of submission and obedience, *with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not unto men, so doing the Will of God from the heart, by being subject, not onely for wrath, but also for Conscience sake.* If he be a Master, he behaves himself towards his dependants with that sweetness and good will, so as to make the yoke easie and pleasant to them, *knowing that his Master also is in heaven, and that there is no respect of persons with him*: And if he be a Servant, he makes Conscience of doing his Masters business, *not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, Fearing God.* If he have Children, they he knows are given to him that he may bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; are they taken from him? then he knows they are returned unto him that gave them.

Has he an affluence of all the good things of this World? then he looks up with thankfulness to the Soveraign Disposer of all things, from whose Bounty he has received them all; and he considers himself as the Steward of these manifold Gifts of God; and therefore takes care to dispence them prudently,

ly, to the honour of the Supream Lord; Piously, to the neceſſities of his Brethren; and ſo by his bountifulneſs cauſeth many thankſgivings unto God. He makes to himſelf Friends of the periſhing ſubſtance, that he may have his ſhare in the Immortal Riches; and how large ſoever his Poſſeſſions may be on Earth, yet his Country, his Heart, his Converſation is in Heaven.

Does Poverty, or other Calamities afflict him? The[illegible]he knows *do not ſpring out of the ground*, but are ſent and managed by the Conduct of the Almighty. By theſe therefore he is corrected, and humbled; inſtructed, and improved. His Mind, which muſt ſuſtain him under any difficulties, is it ſelf ſupported by the Divine Aſſiſtances, and the conſtant chearfulneſs of a good Conſcience; whoſe Comforts will refreſh his Soul, *when the Fields ſhall yield no meat, and the Flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold.* Hab.3.17.

In a word, whatſoever condition that is which is the Effect of God's Will, is alſo the Object of his own Choice, he deſires to be none other thing in this World than his good Providence ſhall be pleaſed to make him; therefore he can with Patience have his expectations

pectations fruſtrated, he can take any diſappointment in what he moſt affects; and tho he knows it to be his duty, to uſe all lawful means to preſerve to himſelf, and his dependants, the comforts of this life; yet when that's done, he wiſely reſigns himſelf to the Sovereign Will of God, and dares not conteſt with him, whoſe Will we may not, we cannot indeed reſiſt. To this height of Mind was St. *Paul* arrived, with ſuch an excellent ſpirit was he endued, *Phil.* 4. 12. *I know both how to be abaſed, and how to abound; every where, and in all things, I am inſtructed, both to be full, and to be hungry; both to abound, and to ſuffer need.*

And a man thus well prepared for all the contingencies of humane life, and that can thus well govern himſelf in any condition wherein he may be placed, as the Virtuous and Religious Man you ſee can do, muſt needs be a Wiſe and Underſtanding man.

2. I come now to ſpeak to the Second Particular, wherein I propoſed to ſhew, what this Excellency of ſpirit is, and what are thoſe things eſpecially that manifeſt it.

Now for a ſpirit to be *Excellent*, is to be endued with that Divine Temper of Mind, and all thoſe Perfections which are apt to excite our *Love*, and our *Admiration*, and our *Praiſe*. To have all thoſe Qualifications which we cannot but Honour, and highly Eſteem; For *Honour is an acknowledgment of anothers excellency*. As on the other hand, *baſeneſs* and *ſordidneſs* of Spirit is apt to beget our hatred, and contempt. And then we account the mind *baſe* and ſordid, when it has contracted ſuch Evil habits, as make a Man unfit for ſociety; when it is cruel, or proud, or malicious, when it is perfidious, or Cowardly, or ſuperſtitious; when it is ſunk down in ſenſe, and become *Earthly*, *Senſual*, *Deviliſh*. But that wiſdom which gives this excellency of Spirit, *is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be intreated, full of Mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocriſie*. James 3. 17.

Now this greatneſs and *Excellency* of Spirit, which it is a piece of natural juſtice in us to love and Honour, manifeſts it ſelf chiefly in theſe following things.

1. In a reſolute performance of our duty, not-

notwithſtanding the dangers that it may expoſe us unto.

2. In a patient and magnanimous bearing of thoſe afflictions, or calamities which may befal us.

3. In a valiant reſiſting all thoſe gay Temptations of the World, which are deſigned to draw us into Sin.

4. In being willing and ready to Forgive our Enemies.

5. In delighting in an univerſal Beneficence, in doing good unto all Men.

Theſe are the things which diſcover the true greatneſs and Excellency of the wiſe Mans Spirit.

1. A reſolute performance of our duty, notwithſtanding the dangers which it may expoſe us unto.

For *Daniel* to make his dayly Prayers to the God of Heaven and Earth, by whoſe ſpecial Providence he had been raiſed above all the Princes of *Perſia*, when there was no Decree of the King againſt it, nor could he run any hazard by ſuch Devotions, was no more than might be expected from every *Iſraelite*: But to do it when the Decree was Sealed according to the Law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*, that

*he ſhould ask no Petition ſave onely of the King*; not to intermit the doing of his duty onely for *Thirty dayes*, ſo to have wiſely complyed with the Law, which he knew was purpoſely contrived againſt himſelf, that ſo he might out-wit his Enemies; and by caution and prudent yielding make their folly in the end, more conſpicuous than their malice was in the beginning: But when he knew that *they had bent their Bow, and made ready their Arrows to ſhoot at him that was upright in heart*; when the writing was ſigned, then to go into his houſe, *open his windows, pray three times a day to his God as afore-time*, tho the next Prayer he was to make, might be in the *Den of Lions*; was an argument that he deſerved all that character which *Belſhazzar's Queen* had given of him, namely, *that light, and wiſdom, and underſtanding, and an excellent ſpirit was found in him*, Dan. 5. 11, 12.

The like greatneſs of ſpirit was it that animated the three *Jewes*, which were ſet over the Affairs of the Province of *Babylon*, *Dan.* 3. See but with what bravery they anſwered *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he required them to fall down and worſhip his *golden Image*; and in caſe they refuſed, were to be caſt

caſt the ſame hour into the mid'ſt of a *burning fiery Furnace*; *We are not careful to anſwer thee*, ſay they, *in this matter*; *If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us, and he will deliver us*; *But if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not ſerve thy gods.* We know our Duty, and are reſolved to practiſe it, whatſoever the iſſue of it ſhall be: Our God, we are ſure, is able to deliver us, & we truſt that he will do ſo; but that we leave to his Wiſdom: For tho we were ſure that he would not deliver us, yet we need no time to deliberate what is beſt for us to do; we come provided with an anſwer, and with a reſolution, *for we muſt worſhip the Lord our God, and him onely muſt we ſerve, therefore we will not worſhip thy gods.*

This was that wiſdom, and ſpirit, with which our Lord endued his Apoſtles, and furniſhed them for the work of the Miniſtry whereunto he had appointed them, which all their Adverſaries were not able to gainſay, nor reſiſt. By this they durſt appeal unto the *Sanhedrim* it ſelf whether they could be diſpenſed with, for waving their duty, *Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* They entred

tred their Proteſtation with boldneſs, what they deſigned to do for the future, *For we cannot* (ſay they) *but ſpeak the things which we have ſeen, and heard*; and this made them *depart from the preſence of the Council with joy, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the Name of Chriſt.*

And tho the Apoſtles were men of the greateſt Caution, and Prudence imaginable; moſt careful in all their words, and actions, of giving the leaſt offence; Men of the greateſt Compliance in all indifferent matters, ſuch as ſtood upon no punctilio's, but yielded to every one, in all things that they could, *becoming all things to all men*, as our great *Apoſtle* profeſſes of himſelf; living as *Jewes*, or *Gentiles*, accordingly as they converſed with them that lived under, or without the Law; although, I ſay, they were men of ſuch *Freedom* and ingenuity, and could ſuite themſelves with all tempers and diſpoſitions, in all indifferent matters, which was not the leaſt Inſtance of the excellency of their Spirits: yet in all things of plain duty, where they had the command of God to bear them out, they were Men of the moſt reſolved, and ſteddy principles, they would endure Tryal of

of cruel mockings, and ſcourgings, of bonds, and impriſonment, and death, rather than they would renounce one tittle of their holy Faith, or be any way drawn from the performance of their duty. By this did the *Primitive Chriſtians* offer themſelves up willing ſacrifices to their *Heathen* perſecutors; and by this did our *Proteſtant Anceſtors* confirm the truth of their profeſſion with their bloud. When the *Papiſts* made bone-fires of ſuch as could not ſwallow their doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*; perſecuted them to the death, that could not partake of their *Altar*, where they pretend to ſacrifice *Jeſus Chriſt*, i. e. to kill, and deſtroy him, If the *formal* notion of a *Sacrifice*, as their own men ſay, lies in the deſtruction of it; becauſe they could not believe that a *Prieſt* could make his God, by ſaying of a few words, and then pay *Divine*, and therefore *Idolalatrical* worſhip to the *Hoſt*; therefore muſt they be burnt for *Hereticks*; and ſo they were indeed, and reſolutely loſt their lives, rather than they would by any ſinful compliances renounce, or diſſemble their holy profeſſion; and by that *Heroick* Act, gave ſignal proof of the valour and *excellency* of their Spirits.

2. A patient and magnanimous bearing of all the Afflictions, and calamities of this life, is the next Inſtance of this *Excellency* of Spirit.

For the Illuſtrating of this, it may not be unworthy our obſervation, to take notice that the word in the *Text* tranſlated *excellent*, is derived from one ſignifying to *ſtrengthen an Houſe with beams*, and therefore is applied to him, as a *Learned* man obſerves, *cujus animus contignatus eſt, et quaſi Immiſſis trabibus compactus, h. e. fortis et malorum tolerans. To endure hardſhip as a good Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt*, not to ſink under the preſſure of afflictions, but when the *rain deſcends, the Floods come, the Winds blow, and beat upon him*, then to ſtand Immoveable, and not to flinch from his foundation, is an argument of a *Firm, Maſculine*, and well-compoſed ſpirit.

Now by this enduring of Afflictions, is not meant a ſtubborn and reſolved contempt of them, bearing them without all ſenſe, with ſuch an *apathy* as the *Stoicks*, who uſed to miſcall things, practiſed; & by that means loſt the opportunity of improving them: But an humble, & cheerful ſubmiſſion to the Divine Providence, which ſends that bitter Cup unto us, and

and will not let it pass away from us, except we drink it; in consideration of the great goodness, and clemency, justice, and Soveraignty of Almighty God, that he doth whatsoever pleaseth him; that he is righteous in all his wayes; and of very *Faithfulness* causeth us to be troubled; *and that he doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men*, but upon very good reason, and to some good end, *that we might be partakers of his holiness.* For if they come from him as acts of *Justice*, then it is to chastise us for our former backslidings; to make us remember whence we are fallen, and repent and return unto him; If they are *trials* of our spiritual strength, we see the great esteem that God hath of us, to train us up thus in *Military* discipline; that when he shall require it, we may prove our selves to be *good Souldiers* of Jesus Christ, and by such exercises may be fitted to do, or to suffer any thing for his Name; but if they shall be proper *persecutions*, & be inflicted on us by the contrivance of the *Evil one*, because we will adhere to our God, and to our religion; then are they our *Crown*, and our *Glory*; and under what notion soever they come, to bear them with Christian patience, is a great argument of *magnanimity*, that is, of an *excel-*

*lent Spirit. Magnus es vir, ſed unde ſcio ſi tibi fortuna non dat Facultatem exhibendæ virtutis?* you think that you have a great Spirit, (ſaith *Seneca*,) but how does it appear; If your valour was never tried by ſufferings? *Regulus*, (ſaith he,) became famous by his torments, it was thoſe which made him ſuch an example of fidelity, and patience; *Socrates*'s honour became more conſpicuous by his adverſaries calumnies; and no man could have known what a great perſonage *Fabritius* had been, If he had not had poverty to have conflicted with. *Indeed, magnum exemplum niſi mala Fortuna non invenit, it is being appointed unto death*, (to tranſlate that in the *Apoſtles* words) *that muſt make us a Spectacle to the World, and to Angels, and to Men.* This was the path which our Lord trod before us, he, *for the ſuffering of death, was crowned with glory, and honour; for it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many Sons unto Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings.* Heb. 2. 10.

3. The next inſtance, is a valiant reſiſting all the gay Temptations of the World, when they become motives to draw us into Sin.

And indeed, this ſeems an argument of greater

greater *worth* and *excellency* then the former; inasmuch as afflictions are apt to make our minds grow ſtrong, and ſinewy, make us recollect our Forces, ſtand upon our Guard, and be more watchful to gain ſuch advantages, as may relieve us, and even by frequent reſiſting we get more courage; and ſo at length frequently obtain the victory. Whereas the Temptations of the World are apt to looſen, and diſſolve our minds, they work upon us inſenſibly, and before we are aware of them; they have a party within our Breaſts, which is ready to prepare their way for them, and to give them entertainment; he that endeavours to ſtudy, and underſtand them, though with a deſign to reſiſt them, ſometimes hazards his Innocence; but he that contracts an acquaintance with them loſes it; the beſt way to ſave our ſelves is to *eſcape* the pollutions of the World; he conquers its Temptations, that flieth from them.

We have heard of the excellency of *Joſephs* Spirit, how by the ſuperabundance of that grace that was given unto him, he reſiſted the frequent ſolicitations of his *Miſtreſs*, though all the comforts of this World, might ſeem to depend upon his enjoying of the

light of her Countenance; and by ſubduing his inclinations, and overcoming his intereſts, making all yield to the Divine command, he ſhewed himſelf to be in a good meaſure fit for the government of *Egypt*. Upon the ſame principle was it, that *Moſes* refuſed to be called the Son of *Pharaoh's* daughter, when once he ſaw that thoſe honours would ſtand between him, and the Love and ſervice of God; and therefore did he deſpiſe the pleaſures of Sin, and eſteem the reproach of *Chriſt*, greater riches than all the treaſures of *Egypt*. And he that can thus overcome the World, and keep his Integrity, when riches, and honours, and pleaſures, ſhall be the reward of his falling down, and worſhiping, muſt needs be a perſon of an excellent Spirit.

The Devil reſerved this, for the laſt onſet that he made upon our *Bleſſed Saviour*, St. Matt. 4. 8, 9. *He ſhewed him all the Kingdoms of the World, and the glory of them, and ſaith unto him, all theſe things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worſhip me*; upon whoſe refuſal, and ſharp rebuke of the impudent Tempter, the *Devil leaveth him*, v. 11. as knowing, that it was to no boot, to ſolicite him

him any longer, who had ſhewed himſelf to be all that he pretended, by his deſpiſing ſo great an offer.

Indeed, when we well conſider it, what are all the ſatisfactions of this World, to the deſires, and acquiſitions of an excellent mind? what are all thoſe things that men make ſuch a buſtle about, for which they will ſacrifice their lives, and ſtudy, and health, and peace; nay for which they will venture their Souls, and run the hazard of being damn'd, but ſtraws and feathers, the trifles of Fools, and Children, when compared with the concerns of the other World, and with the Everlaſting portion of our underſtanding Man.

As *Scipio* was going up to Heaven, *Cicero* tells us (in his *Som. Scip.*) that the whole earth appeared ſo little to him, *ut me imperij noſtri pœniteret*, (ſaith he;) that he was aſhamed of his victories, and triumphs, amazed at his madneſs in Fighting about Kingdomes, which now ſcarce appeared; and he could not but look down with contempt, upon all the Glory of the World which he had left behind him; *The nearer ſurely that any one is to Heaven, the leſs conſiderable will this World appear in his Eye.*

4. The

4. The next inſtance of this excellent Spirit, is forgiving, and loving of our Enemies.

To ſee things clearly, and diſtinctly, and to give unto every one of them their proper eſteem, notwithſtanding the confuſion, and diſorder, that they may put themſelves into, by their animoſities, and ill govern'd paſſions; to be able to ſeperate betwixt a mans Sins, and his perſon; and to purſue this with Love, and thoſe with remedies; not to be prejudiced againſt an enemy by injuries, and ungrateful dealing; but to ſee, and love in him, that which is truely amiable, and to do good unto him, for thoſe characters of the *divine Image*, that are yet viſible in him; This is indeed to ſhew our ſelves to be of *noble*, and *divine* extraction; to be like unto our *Father* which is in *Heaven*, *who is good unto the unthankful, and to the Evil*; and has therefore commanded us *to love our Enemies, to bleſs them that curſe us, and to pray for them that deſpightfully uſe us, and perſecute us; that ſo we may be the Children of our Father which is in heaven; and perfect, even as our Father which is in Heaven is perfect.* S. Matt. 6. 44. and 48.

This is the ornament of that *meek* and *quiet*,

*et*, and *cool* Spirit, which is in the ſight of God, of great price. This is the fruit of that *humility*, which the holy doctrine, and example of our *Lord* teacheth us, and to which he hath promiſed the higheſt exaltation.

To the performance of this duty we are obliged, not onely, for the honour and credit of our religion, whereof this great law of *charity* is by *ſome* thought to be a *peculiar precept*; but alſo by all the *benefits* which we hope to obtain by our *Chriſtianity*; For we can upon no other ſcore expect remiſſion of our Sins at Gods hands, for Chriſts ſake, but even *as we from our hearts forgive, every one our Brother his treſpaſſes.*

*Put on therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindneſs, humbleneſs of mind, meekneſs, Long-ſuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, If any man have a quarrel againſt any: even as Chriſt forgave you, ſo alſo do ye. And let all bitterneſs, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-ſpeaking be put away from you, with all malice.* For indeed to delight in revenge, and to return ſpight, and ill-will, for injury, has been alwaies counted an argument of a weak and *Feminine* Spirit; Such

Such persons may not be satisfied without the ruine of their Enemies; nay, not well pleased unless they may be the Executioners of the mischief; but this is a most hateful temper, such as sets a man at the greatest distance from all the kindness and mercy of Heaven, and makes him onely fit for the society of *Devils*, and *damned Spirits*.

5. The last Instance, is delighting in Universal beneficence, in doing good unto all Men.

It was the hymn of the *Angels* at the birth of *our Lord*, that *Gods good will towards men*, was *glory to him in the highest*, and *on Earth peace*; and we cannot make Gods glory more illustrious, then by imitating his good will, in doing of much good unto others. By rejoycing over the happy, and prosperous man, and blessing of God for the good things which our Neighbour enjoys; By relieving the necessities of the poor, liberally, and chearfully; visiting, and comforting the sick; providing for Orphans; redeeming of Prisoners, and captives. Endeavouring by frequent Prayers, by seasonable Councel, by good Example, to bring into the way of Piety, such as are strangers to it; to confirm and

and eſtabliſh thoſe that already walk in it; and by the Spirit of meekneſs to oppoſe them that ſet themſelves againſt it; this is to walk, as we have had our Lord for an Example, *who went about doing good*; This is truly to imitate the divine beneficence, and to give ſignal teſtimony of an *excellent* Spirit.

God doth much good to all his creatures, meerly for the ſake of the *excellency* of the act of *doing good*; and all things are delightful to him, onely as they imitate, and receive his goodneſs. By it does he communicate of his fulneſs with pleaſure, and receives the ſervices of his Saints with ſatisfaction: This is the Fountain of all thoſe gracious manifeſtations which he has made of himſelf to the World, *wherein he hath abounded towards it in all Wiſdom and Prudence*; and not onely his *Eternal Power*, and *Godhead*, but his *goodneſs* alſo is *clearly ſeen by the things that are made*, having made every thing good about us, for our greater, and fuller felicity. It is to this that we muſt aſcribe our Redemption, It is becauſe he is loving unto every Man, and becauſe he takes no pleaſure in the death of a Sinner, but delights in ſhewing mercy which is his greateſt glory, *that he manifeſted the exceeding great riches of his Grace, in his kindneſs towards us in Chriſt Jeſus*; *and ſent his Son into the World, that the World through him might be ſaved.* Finally, it is this Immenſe

goodneſs which has prepared for all thoſe that love him in ſincerity, *a crown of righteouſneſs, fullneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.*

And if this delighting in *Beneficence* were but the great principle of all our actions, how happy might we make our ſelves, and all that are about us. This would transform Earth into Paradiſe, and one man would become inſtead of God to another. This would remove all envy, and evil-ſpeaking, hatred, and contention out of the World, it would lay the axe to that root of bitterneſs, whence ſpring ſlanders, and back-bitings, *duels*, and *fightings*; and would introduce into it, peace, and bounty, order, and harmony, joy unſpeakable and full of glory. This would declare us to *be the Children of the higheſt*, when we can *do good*, and *lend* (as our Lord commands us) *hoping for nothing again*; even when our doing good may ſometimes interfere with our ſecular intereſts; this indeed manifeſts the true excellency of Spirit.

I come now to the laſt thing I propoſed to ſpeak unto, namely to ſhew briefly,

3. How this Divine Wiſdom contributes to the *Ennobling* of the mind, ſo as to make a man in whom it reſides, be *Emphatically* called one of an *excellent ſpirit*. And this it does in theſe following Particulars.

1. By inlightning the Mind, and informing it with

with the knowledg of the beſt, and moſt excellent things.

2. By regulating and governing the affections of our Minds.

3. By bringing peace and tranquility to our Minds, giving them that eaſe and ſatisfaction without which no man can have a great and *Excellent ſpirit*.

4. By teaching us to improve the excellency of moſt humane actions.

1. Divine Wiſdom helps to *exalt* and *ennoble* our Minds, and to form *excellent* ſpirits within us, by inlightning our underſtandings, and informing us with the knowledg of the beſt and moſt excellent things.

For ſo much more darkneſs as is upon our Minds, ſo much more ſhall we be prone to Errour, and *Superſtition*; which will cauſe diſorder, and confuſion in our actions, inconſtancy in our reſolutions; which will employ our Minds about little affairs, unworthy of their dignity; will make us ſhoot under that noble Mark to which we ſhould direct them, and beget a great lowneſs, and degeneracy of ſpirit in us. But now *when Wiſdom entreth into thine heart, and Knowledg is pleaſant to thy Soul, Diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, Underſtanding ſhall keep thee, and deliver thee from the way of the evil man.* This will enlarge thy Underſtanding, enable it to ſee beyond

the narrow bounds of time and ſenſe, to behold things that are inviſible, to *look within the vail, whither the Fore-runner is for us entred*, and to know him that paſſeth all knowledge. And then thou wilt find thy feet ſet in *a large room*, and that thou canſt run the way of Gods Commandments, when he has thus enlarged thy heart, with the knowledge of the moſt uſeful, and excellent things. For ſuch they are, which this Divine Wiſdom teacheth us. For it clearly reveals to us, the nobleſt end unto which we can aſpire, namely the attainment of that *life and Immortality*, which our Lord purchaſed for all thoſe that obey him; and furniſheth us with the true means that will qualifie us for it, and conduct us to it; by teaching us to be *like unto God*, by our living up to the dignity of our rational Natures, and of our holy profeſſion.

2. By regulating and governing the affections of our Mind.

The *affections* are not unfitly ſtyled by ſome, *the Wings and Chariot of the Soul*; For by them is the Soul carried forth towards thoſe objects which delight it, with joy, and briſkneſs; and flyes thoſe which it has an *averſion* for, with eagerneſs: Now when the affections are diſorderly and Immoderate, the Soul is driven by them as the *Chariot* of the *Sun* is ſaid to have bin by *Phaeton*, out of its proper road, into dangerous untrodden paths, to the

the manifest hazard of the Rider; or as *Ships* in the Sea that are driven by fierce Winds, and want a Prudent *Governour* at the Helm, whithersoever the wind listeth. The irregularity of the passions narrow and contract the Mind, brings it into straits, and difficulties, weakens its *cognoscitive* and *motive* Faculties, makes it unfit to discern, and unable to perform its several offices. But now this *Wisdom* introduceth *light* and *order* among the affections, by setting every one of them about their proper work, prescribing to them their due bounds, saying unto each of them, *Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further.*

This refines and sublimates our *Love*, it teacheth us what, and how far we should love, by giving us clear and distinct Notions of every object's loveliness; and so informeth us, what kind, and degree of affection we should bestow upon the things of *this life*; and with what zeal, and ardour we should pursue those which concern the *next*. This discovers what Foundation we may have for a *sure* and *stedfast Hope*; or what ground for a *discreet* and *rational Fear*; what bottom we may lay for a *lasting joy*; and how we may make *sorrow*, and *heaviness* flee away. In *summ*, it teacheth us how we may make all our *Passions* instruments of Religion and Virtue, and so *spiritualize*, and ennoble even the *inferiour Faculties* of the Soul, make them fit, and ready

ready for every good work, and highly ſerviceable to the *ſuperiour*, and more ſpiritual *powers* of the Mind; and conſequently muſt needs add much to the Excellency of the ſpirit. Which this Wiſdom does further promote

3. By bringing *Peace* and Tranquility to our Minds, giving them that eaſe and ſatisfaction without which no man can have a great and *Excellent* ſpirit.

For when the Mind is not at eaſe, when all is not *peace* within, but the ſtorms which ariſe there *ruffle* it, and put it out of its own poſture; this muſt needs hinder its *true Magnanimity*, and make it Cowardly, and *Superſtitious*; apt to ſuſpect the worſt that can happen, and yet unable to provide againſt it, or to ſuſtain it when it does come. *The wicked flee* (ſaith the *Wiſe Man*) *when no man purſueth, but the Righteous are as bold as a Lion.* *Thoſe* are jealous of every evil that may fall out; for they look within themſelves, and find nothing but *darkneſs*, and *dimneſs of anguiſh*; but the *other* know not how to be apprehenſive of danger, ſince they ſee nothing in themſelves whence it may ariſe. An inſtance of *thoſe*, is *Cain*, who became a *Vagabond* upon the Earth, afraid leſt every one that met him would ſlay him; and of *theſe*, are they that could ſay, *We will not fear tho the Earth be removed, tho the Mountains be carried into the midſt of the Sea*, Pſal. 46.2. or as *David*, *tho I walk*

*through*

*through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil*, Ps. 23. 4.

Now it is the property of this *Wisdom*, which is first *pure*, and then *peaceable*, to bring ease and quiet to our Minds. This gives us an account of our Estates from judgment, and certainty, and not from conjecture and fancy. It informs us truly what we are, and tells us also what we may be; that we are born to high and mighty things, that we are made capable of great honours, and vast Inheritances, and everlasting Pleasures, such as shall not waste themselves in the enjoyment, nor ever cloy us, tho we shall live to Eternity upon them; and this is apt to create joy and delight in our Minds, and consequently to exalt and raise our spirits. Which this Divine Wisdom doth

4. Lastly, by teaching us to improve the worth of most humane actions, and as a *Wise* Man of our *own* has well observed, instructs us to raise them to a higher pitch of Excellency than of their own Nature they are capable.

For this teaches us to serve God by the works of our ordinary Callings, by using strict Justice in all our dealings; by referring the success of all our labours to his blessing, and giving God the glory of all our prosperity. By taking the disappointment, and miscarriage of our works, and designs, patiently, and waiting his good pleasure, and his own time,

time, for better success. By making us industrious and diligent in our several Vocations, yet free from that solicitude and care of the issue of our affairs, which would disturb our repose, and hinder our Souls from enjoying the good, and sweet, of all the labour, and travel which we have taken under the Sun. This will keep the Wisdom of the *Politician* from degenerating into Cunning; it will bottom it upon the firm Principles of Honesty and Integrity, and teach him to acknowledge him in all his wayes, who takes the wise in his own craftiness. And Finally, it will teach us all so to use this World, as not abusing it, and so to husband our Portion in this life, that at the Great Day of Accounts, our Lord may say to every one of us, *Well done good and faithful Servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee Ruler over many things, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,* To whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, Three Persons, and One God, be ascribed by us, and his whole Church, all Praise and Adoration both now, and for evermore; *Amen.*

*FINIS.*

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ERRATA. mended.

P. 2. Line. 21. read; *become.* p. 9. l. 1. r. *be.* p. 12. l. 5. r. *religious.* p. 14. l. 1. r. *be.* p. 16. l. 11. r. *these.*